

SAYING THE MAGIC WORDS

The first day of my first official year in the Harvard University Band began just as the first day of my final official year. Nervously, I waited for the magic words that would launch the six-minute entertainment whirlwind I was about to embark on the for the first of what would seem like countless times—“Ladies and Gentlemen, the Harvard University “insert wildly funny tag—line here” Band! As a freshman, I awaited the words just behind the home end zone in Soldier’s Field swathed in my crisp new jacket, brandishing a trumpet, and absolutely sure that I was going to mess something up.

Four years later I found myself in the same jacket, albeit slightly worn, waiting for those magic words and still absolutely sure that I was going to mess something up. Things were just a little different though, I was behind a microphone about sixty feet up and to the right of where I stood that first Saturday in September 1999, responsible for starting everything off and making sure everything went right. I flipped on the public address system, and to my surprise it was my voice that set the Band’s first field show of the year into motion.

As Drill Master, for nine wild consecutive weeks it was my job to try to tap the unique creative abilities of some 70 bandies, sculpt together some 70 different ideas, and choreograph our collective vision to please thousands of people of all different ages. In a year that saw so much tragedy the mission to produce shows that both entertained our varied audience while retaining the tremendous spirit that makes every HUB show unique was more difficult than ever. With great creativity and hard work though, I believe the band fulfilled the challenge; it is now my honor to recap our season of halftime hilarity.

Holy Cross -- Cancelled

Brown

Crimson 27 – Brown 20

Our first show of the year honored our omnipresent “Bulbous Behemoth of Bass,” Bertha the Drum. With the help of the arranging prowess of our Student Conductor, the band weaved our “Subsonic Sister’s” musical bildungsroman from her mischief at Woodstock to her present position as HUB drum matriarch and even revealed the origin of the huge H’s that adorn her

sides. In an attempt to please the fans as much as we did, the Crimson pulled off a second half victory.

Lafayette

Crimson 38 – Lafayette 14

We followed up our tribute to Bertha with a tribute to summer blockbuster films. Showing a little Hollywood insight, the band revealed what three sequels might grace the silver screen come next year, including my personal favorite: Sly Stallone’s new star vehicle aimed at the older crowd *Rocky VII: Depends on the Opponent*. In what would become a pleasant trend, the football team followed up with their own sequel to their win from the week before.

Northeastern

Crimson 35 – Northeastern 20

Harvard played Northeastern for the first time in eight years this week; the Band decided to try something new as well. Using the entire field as a game board, we paid tribute to three video games that are legendary for helping to waste time. Former vice-president Al Gore was heard to remark of our agile renditions of Pong, Tetris, and Snood (coincidentally invented by band alum Dave



Dobson ’89), “in a word—stunning.”

Cornell

Crimson 26 – Cornell 6

After playing for new President Larry Summer’s Installation (we’ll get back to him later) the band hopped on a couple busses and

traveled to Ithaca, New York. There we suggested some new recruiting techniques to drum up excitement on Cornell’s rather predictable campus. With a little help from two jauntily dressed freshmen, one cow, and a very persistent shark, applying to Cornell would never be the same again.

Princeton

Crimson 28 - Princeton 26

Princeton students have been at a loss for entertainment ever since their nude Olympics were shut down. This week, we told the tale of Princeton students who tried their luck, not to mention their meager intellect, on game shows to fill the void created by the loss of their “au-natural” games.

Dartmouth

Crimson 31 – Dartmouth 21

When Dartmouth rolled into Cambridge we had prepared a very special surprise 232nd birthday party for them. We celebrated Eleazor “Fluffy” Wheelock’s choice to found Dartmouth in a pastoral land perfect for students and their woolly friends, and the great leaps that have been made in Hanover student housing over the years, from overcrowded shacks to overcrowded trailer homes. We topped off the unforgettable birthday celebration with a cake for the Big Green and a special appearance by Natalie Ignacio ‘03.

Columbia

Crimson 45 – Columbia 33

After the Crimson came back from a 21 point first half deficit against Dartmouth to remain unbeaten, the band followed our Gridiron Kings to Columbia where we revealed the relationship between Columbia’s Football team and the famous psychic Miss Cleo. We found that Columbia students’ futures look as bright and shiny as their future employer’s Golden Arches. The Crimson prevailed on the field and we “officially” welcomed our freshman to the band in the stands. On the bus ride home we began preparing for the following week’s battle of the unbeaten Ivy League squads.

Pennsylvania

Crimson 28 – Pennsylvania 21